

71 EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

28 March 1968

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More High-Level Rumanian-Yugoslav Visits

Predrag Ajtic, high ranking Serbian communist party official, arrived in Bucharest on 26 March. He was met by Rumanian party functionaries Vasile Vlad and Ion Catrinescu. Ajtic's visit follows by one day the arrival in Belgrade of Rumanian deputy defense minister and air force second-in-command Gheorghe.

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COMMENT: So far there have been four high level visits by Yugoslav and Rumanian officials in March, three of them since the 21st, when Yugoslav foreign minister Nikezic made a sudden visit to Bucharest. Ajtic, who was ambassador to Bulgaria in the early sixties, before being railroaded out of a job by Rankovic, is also an expert on Albania. Vlad is in charge of Rumanian party relations with the communist bloc.

Tito's Japanese Trip Scheduled for 8 to 15 April

Yugoslav President Tito will visit Japan from 8 to 15 April, according to an official 27 March Belgrade announcement. This will be Tito's first visit to Japan and is taking place at the invitation of the Japanese government.

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COMMENT: Yugoslavia and Japan renewed diplomatic relations in 1952 and since then ties between the two countries have generally strengthened, especially in trade and cultural fields. Tito's visit is viewed as a chance to expand and build on these good relations.

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Yugoslav Press Critical of East Europe Reporting on Czech Developments

Criticism--explicit and implied--of other socialist countries for failing to keep their public fully and objectively informed of the developments in Czechoslovakia is appearing in the Yugoslav press. The strongest comment was in a 25 March editorial in the weekly Ekonomika Politika which called the silence on Czech events "unjustified," and painted a dramatic picture of the Dresden meeting taking place while Soviet and East German troops carried out maneuvers on the Czech border.

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COMMENT: This criticism points to Belgrade's very real fear that pressure is mounting in the Soviet Union and East Europe to thwart the trends in Czechoslovakia.

Albanian Spies on Trial in Yugoslavia

Five Albanians on trial in Bitolj, Macedonia, have pleaded guilty to charges of working for the Albanian intelligence service. The Yugoslavs accused the ring-leader, Oloman Selja, of creating a group to foster pro-Albanian manifestations in the Macedonian-Albanian border area. Among the incidents cited at the trial was the flying of Albanian flags, some with pro-Hodxa and pro-Mao inscriptions, in the Bitolj area on the Albanian national day last November.

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COMMENT: The most damning charge against the defendants is not that of espionage, but that of encouraging pro-Albanian separatism in Yugoslavia. Despite Belgrade's months old "lets be friends" campaign toward Albania, the trial underlines the Yugoslavs' continued sensitivity to Tirana's wooing of the million Albanians living in Yugoslavia.

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Yugoslavs Criticize Polish Reaction to Student Unrest

Criticism of Poland's anti-semitic stance in blaming the sons of former leaders with Jewish surnames for student unrest has appeared in the Yugoslav Communist Party weekly, Komunist. The writer, Oskar Davico, himself a Jew, said he was revolted by the blindness of certain Poles who did not grasp the realities of the student demonstrations and blamed a few Jews for everything that went wrong.

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COMMENT: To date this is the strongest criticism of the Polish regime to appear in the Yugoslav press. Most Yugoslavs probably sympathize with the students.

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